

A

# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, May 29. 1707.

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If this Paper be all *Miscellanies*, and the however mighty Cause of the Northern Affair laid a little aside, I believe the Reader will excuse the Disorder of it, for the Reasons he will find in the Sequel; and therefore I make no further Apology for it.

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## MISCELLANEA.

MY Thundering, High-Flying, Frankly'd Letter, which I presented you in my last, comes necessarily to be spoken to now; it is indeed sent me a great Way, and comes to hand, just as Mr. Dyer in his News Letter tells us the News from Paris of a Defeat given by Lord Galway in Spain, and that the Dutch Squadron had taken 3 of our great Men of War, and 30 Merchant Ships going from the Downs to Portsmouth.

The Author of the Letter indeed is very quick, to send his Blunder by the very first Post; and it seems to me, he is so elated with these two Successes, that His Invincible Monarch is certainly in his Height glorified in his primitive Strength, as if the Battles of Blenheim, Ramillies and Turin had never been fought.

I have nothing but his and Mr. Dyer's Credit for the Particulars of the News, and what Alterations the lame Post may

make

make in the Account, I am sure he cannot know; We know this, that the French Affairs stand in great need of something, whether real or imaginary, to support them; and if they have got any Advantage in Spain, they are so ignorant of their Circumstances, as not to blow up the Noise of it ~~in~~ 5 times as much as it is; since they know this also, that the Confederates can by no means have the Particulars of the Matter so soon as they.

If any Man will examine back the constant Custom of the French in such Cases as these, there may be good Reason enough to expect, that all this mighty Story may windle away to a small Matter; and if the Gross be true, we may venture to discourse 3 Parts in 4 of the Particulars.

Nor are our Affairs so ill concerted, or can the Enemy rationally suppose them so, as for one Brush to be immediately beaten out of all Spain; nay, Monsieur has conquer'd Portugal too at one Dash; but have we no Troops there, to stand upon the Defensive? Has King Charles III. no retreat to take Breath in? Is Barcelona, Alicant, and Gibraltar taken already? Is not our Fleet, and Sir Cloudsly Shovel, Master of the Mediterranean? Cannot he send a Squadron to Final, and bring some of Prince Eugene's Army to relieve them; some of those brave Fellows that with 17000 Foot beat the French Army of twice that Number out of their Trenches at Turin; and that so justly are a Terror to the French?

As to the Portuguese, indeed I think, they are not much to be rely'd upon in the Field, and I cannot but believe, if there has been a Rout, it has been among them; for as to the Confederate Troops, if they were in such a Body, as the Enemy boast of, 20000 Men, I must beg Monsieur's Pardon for believing the Story at all; and if it was only the Portuguese, I fancy, even the French themselves know too well, of how little Signification that may be to reckon much upon their Conquest.

As to Sea Affairs, that the French in flying Squadrons are able to do us a great deal more Mischief than we can do them, is owing not so much to their Strength, which in a Fleet dares not look us in the Face; or

to their Policy, which has often been found mistaken, but to the Quantity of our Shipping, and the Magnitude of our Trade, which spreading into every Corner of the World, cannot have Squadrons and Convoys to every Ship; and 'tis almost impossible, a Dunkirk Squadron could put to Sea, and not fall in with some Ships or other; and if these little Disasters, which are always inevitable in War, are so significant as to restore the Reputation of France lost in 3 Battles, let them go on and see, if they can retrieve the Blow in Flanders or in Italy, and if they can prevent the Confederates penetrating into the Bowels of their own Kingdom, while they are grasping at others.

But alas! What must we do for his Portuguese Majesty, who this Boaster has at one Blow beaten out of his Dominions, and sent for Sanctuary to Rome?

To this foolish Bluster I answer,

1. If it should be so, the Confederates have good Pawns in their Hands to redeem Portugal with, such as the Principality of Leige, the Electorate of Cologne and Bavaria, the Dutchy of Mantua, &c. of which 'tis time enough to talk when the Sky falls, and those Larks come to be taken.

2. The Confederates do not use to stand by their Allies, as the French King does, viz. abandon them when a little pinch'd by the Disaster of the War, so as he did King James at the last Peace, and the Duke of Mantua; but this very Winter, whoever depends upon the Protection of the Confederates, let them go to the Emperor, to the Duke of Savoy, and King Charles III. to the ~~States~~ of Turin and ~~the~~ D'Orlans, and there they may be inform'd, in what manner the English and ~~Dutch~~ stand by, and defend their Allies; and that 'tis not so easie to ruin Princes, who depend upon their Support, as it is to ruin those, whose Weakness pushes them into the Protection of France.

But this sinking French Cause is no otherwise to be upheld, and 'tis a Testimony of its Weakness, that the Champions of it fly to their old Shifts of Boasting and Rhodomantading, as if the Confederates were to be blustered out of their Cause, or beaten with Words: One would think, they have Cause enough

enough to know better, and they need but go back to *Ramillies*, or *Hochs*, or ask the Troops of the Household, the Guards, or the Regiment Du Rey, and they will tell them otherwise.

And so to my Letter, Sir; King Charles is not beaten out of Spain, Sir; the King of Portugal driven to Rome, or our *Lewd* *Mad-surpriz'd* with a Boast and a Bluster; One Battle will not unravel the Affair of Spain, or make the Confederates abandon that Enterprize; perhaps it may quicken them to send such Supplies, as will make the French very wary, how they venture another Battle.

And now, Gentlemen, you that are melancholy and wistful at these things; pray, what is the Matter all on a sudden? How are we frightened with Bugbears? — Are the Confederates reduced to such a Condition, that one Blow must undo them? Must the losing one Battle discourage us, or one Disappointment make us despair? Pray, Gentlemen, look back; King William lost the Battle of *Leyden*, and yet in a short time after besieg'd *Namur*; but if you want Examples, go to the French themselves, and view their present Posture; see them in two Summers defeated in four killing Strokes *Blenheim* and *Ramillies*, *Brussels* and *Turin*, four such Blows never Nation stood, and appear'd again, and yet they show themselves in the Field, and have been able to offer you Battle a fifth time in Spain.

And now, Gentlemen, after all, let me suppose a thing, which I am sure, no wise Man, at least no Friend to the Confederate Cause, can wish for; suppose that the French Interest was so superior in Spain, as to oblige you to quit that Enterprize, and abandon your Conquests there, which is the worst any Body can rationally suggest.

Is not the French Power reduc'd to so low an Ebb in other Parts, that he fies on all Hands for Peace; and what would Spain be but a good Morsel to deliver up to bring the Confederates to a Peace?

I most confess, in my private Opinion, I am for Peace with Honourable Conditions, and a Reduction of Power to a due Balance; and if France would disgorge all Encroachments on her Neighbours, whether

made by Fraud or Force, if the French King would quit Spain and all its Dominions, nay, that the *Good for little Kingdoms* of Naples and Sicily were left to King Philip, if he would surrender his invincible Fortresses in Alsace, and become Original Ministerian France or Pyrenean France; I suppose I am understood, if he would restore his deposed Neighbours and his persecuted Subjects, and give them the Edict of *Nantes* again, I would be for adjourning the tearing him to pieces, and dividing his Dominions among us, things some People have talk'd big of, to another time, when GOD shall think fit more visibly to direct it.

If Spain then becomes a Bribe in his Hand to buy Peace from the Confederates, if it proves a Temptation to us the former to grant him that Peace, I confess, I should think it the better bestow'd, and grudge the Loss the less.

As to those Phlegmatick People, who cry out upon this Loss, that Spain is gone, that we shall be glad at last to make Peace without it, and that we can never recover it again; I must be allow'd to be positive there, No, Gentlemen, not so bad neither. Besides, the Nature of things contradic's that Nation; England can make no Peace without Spain.

The Balance of Trade; The Balance of Power requires it.

To the Affair of Trade; I believe, I need say little of the Negatives upon Britain and Holland; not only that *Thessaly*, but that France should not have the Dominion of Spain. The Channel of our Manufactures, the Consumption of our Produce, the Supply of our Bullion, the Employ of our Shipping, in short the general Wealth and Strength of Britain depends so much upon the Trade with Spain, that we can no more let the French enjoy Spain, than we can permit them to block up the River of Thames, or put a Garrison into the Tower of London.

On the other hand, we cannot withstand the Trade to Spain, on Account of the Import from thence, viz. The Wine, Oyl, Cocheneal, Fruic, &c. Which is the Produce of old Spain, and above all, the Wool; which are, especially the Woolly Oyl, and Cocheneal, Capital Articles in our Manufactures.